

Box VI, 97. E. Clonmel

1854

97. E. Box 0180

Twelfth
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
COMMITTEE
OF THE
Clonmel

Mechanics' Institute,

TO THE
ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD IN THE
Lecture-Room, on the Fifth of January,
1854 ;

With an Account of the Income and Expenditure.

J. HACKETT,
PRINTER, BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER,
101, MAIN-STREET,
CLONMEL.

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ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
COMMITTEE
OF THE
CLUMMET

OF THE
CLUMMET

ANNUAL MEETING

HELD IN THE
CLUMMET-HOUSE, on the 15th of January

1854

With an account of the same and proceedings

J. HACKETT,
PRINTER, BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER,
101, MAIN STREET,
CLUMMET.

TWELFTH
ANNUAL REPORT,
OF THE
Committee
OF THE
CLONMEL MECHANICS' INSTITUTE,
TO THE
Annual General Meeting,
1854.

IN laying before this meeting, the Twelfth Annual Report of the Clonmel Mechanics' Institution, the Committee have to congratulate its Friends and Subscribers on its final architectural completion. Begun in the year 1845, the original plan of the Building could be only carried out partially at that time, owing to the limited amount of funds. Since then, many causes have occurred to retard its completion. Besides the usual difficulties with which all infant institutions, especially literary ones, have to struggle, the unprecedented famine, which for several years pressed so heavily on all ranks and classes of our countrymen, had, of course, no small effect in diminishing its resources. It augurs well, however, for the literary taste and public spirit of our citizens, that amidst all the many urgent pecuniary calls upon them, this Institution was not suffered to go down. The young tree of knowledge, which, in a more prosperous season, they had here planted, they continued still to tend and water. And now that famine, with its attendant evils, has so happily passed away, this Committee look with renewed confidence, to that liberality and public spirit to enable them so to extend and foster it, that it may continue to impart the fruits of intelligence and pure intellectual enjoyment to all ranks and classes of the community.

With a liberality well deserving to be recorded in its annals, the Messrs. Malcomson placed £100 to the credit of its Trustees, for the especial purpose of aiding in finishing the Building. And this, together with £350—a portion of an unexhausted local charitable fund, placed

at the disposal of its Committee for a like purpose, with the sanction of the Irish Government, has enabled your Committee to effect that object, without making any new appeal to the liberality of their fellow-citizens. It is true, that the Building lacks somewhat of the architectural ornament that was proposed in the original design, but it wants nothing of the real permanent utility.— And your Committee beg leave, in this place, to record their obligations to their architects, the Messrs. Doolin, for the very substantial and excellent manner in which they have fulfilled their contract.

Whilst, however, congratulating you, its Friends and Subscribers, on its material enlargement, your Committee regret that they have it not in their power to record a proportionate increase of its members, or in the amount of its finances.

Members, &c.

The Members for the past year amount to 252—of whom 50 are life members, 49 subscribers of £1, 31 of 15s., 107 of 10s., 9s. of 6s., and 6 of 4s. per annum.— It is to be observed, however, that the above numbers embrace many, who subscribed at the annexed rates only for a portion of the year, and tend to give an exaggerated idea of the amount of support accorded to the Institute. A more correct one will be derived from comparing the number of subscribers for the last quarter, namely 132, with 134, the number for the corresponding quarter of last year. This shews an actual decrease in our list of members, and if “the income arising from subscriptions was quite inadequate to defray the annual charge of the establishment,” as stated in the report for 1852, we may be prepared for a corresponding deficiency, when we come to examine the Finances for the past year.

This fact will proclaim, more loudly than your Committee can do, the urgent necessity for increased exertion amongst the friends and supporters of the Institute; for with a heavy current expenditure in the items of rent, coal, gas, Secretary's, and servant's salary, not to speak of the purchase of books and periodicals, it will be absolutely impossible for any Committee, without an increased staff of Subscribers, to keep this Institution in working order, much less free from debt.

The Income.

The total INCOME for the year amounts to £215 5s 1d. being a very serious decrease from £303 15s. 1½d.; the total receipts for the preceding year, which, however, includes the sum of £41 10s. 1½d., received from the Trustees of the Building Fund. Of the above, your Committee have to report £98 15s 9d. as the entire amount of Subscriptions for this year, and when com-

pared with £104 2s. 3d. the proceeds from this source in 1852, shews a considerable falling off in this branch of Income. The sum of £18 9s. was this year derived from the letting of the Lecture-room, showing a deficit compared with £25 6s. 6d., the amount from this source in the former year. For the full particulars, however, the Committee refer to the Treasurer's balance sheet, annexed to this report—merely premising that the expenditure there sets forth, shows only the amount of money actually paid by him, but does not state, of course, our entire liabilities—there being the sum of £66 4s. 2½d., debts outstanding; of which, however, there were £37 8s. 6d. incurred during the former year.

The Library.

With respect to the LIBRARY—the Sub-Committee of which has been most sedulous in the discharge of their duties, during the past year—it at present contains 2,290 volumes, showing an increase of 57 since the last annual report. Of volumes lent up to the 20th December last, there have been 5,610, being a considerable decrease in our circulation, as 6,578 was the number lent during the former year. More fully to account for this, your Committee think it right to state that there is a very general want of interest, evinced and expressed by many of our members, with respect to this branch of the establishment—some having even ceased to subscribe, owing to the fact that your Committee have not had it in their power, from their limited finances, to make such additions of new and interesting works, as many wished, and as are, indeed, necessary to keep up the interest of the reading portion of the public. To this subject, your Committee beg most particular attention. It is not unusual for members to fault your Committee, when they do not find such desirable works added to the Library, as they had suggested. But the fault rests not with your Committee. They are entirely powerless, unless sustained with adequate funds. Even the supply of monthly literature to the Reading-room was, for a time suspended owing to this all-powerful cause. Your Committee, however, are not insensible to the evils that must inevitably result from such a course. They pray to be put in a position to avoid it for the future. But on this subject they have more to say hereafter.

At the annual inspection of the Library, eight volumes appeared to be missing; but of these, some turned up subsequently, and from the confusion consequent on the great want of proper accommodation, and that caused by the late alteration in the premises by our Architect, it was found impossible to arrive at any definite result.—Your Committee have, however, in this place, most

strongly to reprobate a practice, which they find to be pursued by some of our members, namely, of writing their own notes and comments in the margin, and otherwise injuring the books, and they hope that this public notice of it may obviate the necessity of more unpleasant steps.

On the introduction of the daily and weekly press into the reading room, your Committee have again to congratulate you, as being one of the principal means of keeping alive the otherwise declining interest in this establishment. Now, that they have been able to afford their readers, the requisite accommodation, by the transfer of the papers and periodicals into the new and spacious apartment, they look confidently forward to a fresh accession of subscribers to avail themselves of its advantages. Their present Newsroom, in point of an healthful commodious, pleasant situation, is unsurpassed by any in the town. Involving no additional expense for rent, taxes, or attendance, they will be enabled to offer to the public, the news of the day on terms from fifty to seventy per cent. at least cheaper than any other establishment. The room is at present supplied with the following

Newspapers, viz :

THE TIMES,
DUBLIN EVENING MAIL,
Do. Do. POST,
Do. Do. FREEMAN,
THE NATION,
WEEKLY TELEGRAPH,
GENERAL ADVERTISER,
NORTH BRITISH Do,

CORK EXAMINER,
BANNER OF ULSTER,
LIMERICK CHRONICLE,
TIPPERARY FREE PRESS,
CLONMEL CHRONICLE,
and
ILLUSTRATED LONDON
NEWS.

The Periodicals are

THE DUBLIN UNIVERSITY
MAGAZINE,
BLACKWOOD'S Do.
MECHANIC'S Do.
ART UNION JOURNAL.
ELIZA COOK'S Do.
CHAMBER'S Do.

HOGG'S INSTRUCTOR.
ATHENÆUM.
MAGAZINE OF ART.
FAMILY HERALD.
HOUSEHOLD WORDS.
and
PUNCH'S JOURNAL.

But in order to increase the accommodation in this respect, especially in the supply of the London and Provincial Press ; and at the same time to preserve this branch of the Institution self-supporting, it is proposed by your Committee to make some additions to the present rates of subscription, in the case of those who wish to avail themselves of its advantages—an alteration, however, which will require the sanction of this public meeting to render it available. To life members and £1

subscribers, who were by a former resolution of a general meeting, admitted free to the News Room, it is now proposed to charge the annual sum of 10s. for admission. To 10s. members, who at present subscribe 15s. for this with the other departments of the Institute, it is proposed to charge an additional 5s, giving them at the same time free Pit tickets to lectures ; while to mechanics and apprentices, railway servants, and members of the constabulary force, the lowest rate of admission to this, with the other privileges of the Institute, will be 10s. as at present—thus making the rates of subscription, £1 10s, £1, and 10s., respectively ; of course, to those who do not wish to avail themselves of this department, it is not proposed to alter the present rates.

Day and Evening Schools,

With respect to the Day and Evening Schools, the Committee have to congratulate their Subscribers on having procured the services of a most efficient teacher, in the person of Mr. Joyce. As to the excellent system of instruction and management pursued by him, the reports of Dr. Clarke, our Local Inspector, bear honorable testimony. Of the Day School, the Dr. says—"Discipline and order, good ; and literary proficiency, satisfactory ; the ordinary and more necessary branches of school study have been careful and successfully taught."

Of the Night School, the Dr. reports—"I find upon close inquiry, that except one pupil, these in attendance this evening, are constantly engaged in manual labour during this day, which is as it should be with an Evening School. I think that the master is attentive, and I approve entirely of his method of teaching. Order and discipline are well maintained.—Signed, G. S. CLARKE, M.D., M.R.I.A., District Inspector."

Your Committee have to regret, however, that Mr. Joyce has not been sustained by the public as his services merit. The average attendance at the Day School does not exceed the half of that to which it attained during a portion of the former year. The Night School indeed, shews at present, a most favourable increase.—The entire number of pupils received into the day school, this year, was 63 ; and into the Night School, 84 ; and the average attendance, 24 and 16 respectively. The income derivable from pupils fees shows only the small sum of £15 4s. 8½d. against more than double the amount, viz., £38 3s. 10½d. from the same source last year.

The Industrial School.

Of the INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, under the management of its excellent Instructress, Miss Harvey, and the able superintendence of our Vice-President, Wilson Ken-

nedy, Esq., your Committee have to speak most favorably. Pupils to the number of 343 have been received into this School during the past year—of course entirely from the humbler classes. And cash to the amount of £131 has been paid here to said pupils for work done during the same period. Nor is this the entire amount of good that has resulted from it. Two other agencies in the sewed muslin business have been established in the town. These have created a demand for this species of female labour. And the entire payments on this account from these three sources, amount, as your Committee have been informed, to the very considerable sum at present of £25 per week.

It is true that no income has been derived from this School to the Institute; but it must be a source of unmixed satisfaction to all our members that so much good has been conferred on the daughters of our mechanics and artisans, within these walls, at the slight cost of affording the requisite accommodation, and providing fire for the pupils during the winter months.—This branch of learning, however, is still, in this part of the country, comparatively undeveloped. The good that has been done is but a promise of the more extensive benefits that will be conferred in time to come.—Beides, this Institution, as your Committee are happy to report, is in future to profit by it. Through the agency of Mr Kennedy, the Messrs. Holden, of Belfast, who have hitherto supplied the work, have engaged to pay your Committee the sum of £15 for the ensuing year, for the exclusive use of a room for giving out their work.

The Literary Society.

Your Committee have further, to report the establishment of a Literary Society during the past year, chiefly amongst the young members, which promises to be attended with the most beneficial effects. It was conducted with a very considerable degree of interest during its first session, and has resumed its meetings again this winter with renewed vigour. As none can become members of it without subscribing to the Institute, it has been the cause already of adding several new names to our list of members. And as it may be the means of keeping alive the public interest in the library, and fostering a taste in literary questions and pursuits, it has the most cordial wishes of this Committee for its ultimate success.

Lectures.

With regard to LECTURES, your Committee have to express their unqualified regret, that, with the exception of those delivered in the early part of the year by

Doctor M'Knight, on the origin and ancient literature of the Irish nation,—evincing great historical learning, and much elaborate research—your Committee have not been able to provide the usual supply of information in this respect to the members. The fault, however, does not rest with your Committee. They had applied at a very early period to the Royal Dublin Society for a portion of the Government grant for this purpose ; and had also made a conditional engagement with Surgeon Lover. The grant was, indeed, promised : but on our requesting the Society to appropriate it to that gentleman, they required us to accept the services of one of their own staff of Lecturers. Whilst cordially admitting the high scientific abilities of the gentleman named by them, yet having had experience of his want of success as a Lecturer to a mixed audience, your Committee felt compelled to decline the grant on the prescribed condition. They regret that the Royal Dublin Society should have seem fit to have acted with so little regard to the wishes of the applicants, in the disposal of the public money. And they feel this the more, as the Royal Society have since conceded the point in the case of Limerick, and have appropriated the grant to the very gentleman, on whose behalf your Committee had applied.

To obviate this difficulty for the future, namely, that of procuring Lecturers, and proceeding on the well known maxim that “union is strength,” it is proposed by Mr. Joynt, of Limerick, to form an Union of Provincial Mechanics' Institutes. To this proposal, your Committee are disposed to concede their most cordial approval and support. It is hoped that it may be the means of enabling us to procure popular lectures on more reasonable terms than hitherto. Should it succeed, your Committee will not be so dependent, in future, on the aid procurable from the grant placed at the disposal of the Royal Dublin Society. It is but right to add, however, that that Society have since sent us a query sheet to fill up—the usual preliminary of appropriating to us a portion of the grant.

The Building.

Having thus reported, as usual, on the several departments of this Institute, stating freely the sources of discouragement and congratulation, as facts have warranted, your Committee would now proceed to lay before you their views, with respect to the new, and as yet unappropriated portion of the Building. Into the room to the left of the hall as you enter, it is their intention to remove the Library. This, however, they feel should not be undertaken, without making a very large addition to their present stock of books. A Library which may seem considerable in its present very confined situa-

tion, will appear very meagre when removed into the more spacious premises. Besides, the wants of our readers, and the vital interests of this Institute absolutely demand fresh and extensive accessions to our present stock of literature. Without any wish to depreciate our present stock, which contains many valuable, and not sufficiently appreciated works, it must be admitted that much of it is not of that permanently valuable character. Some expense will be incurred by its removal, especially for new furniture and fixtures. Your Committee have not the means at their disposal to undertake the required work. It is for you—its Friends and Supporters—to say whether you will place such funds at their disposal. Out of the ordinary income, the expense of such necessary additions and alterations could not be met. Your Committee would look with confidence, however, to their usual resources—the liberality of their fellow townsmen—to enable them to meet and overcome this difficulty; and to render your Library, in some degree, worthy of the new premises provided for it, at so little cost to its subscribers.

School of Design, &c.

With respect to the new, and very spacious room above stairs, your Committee have long proposed, at the suggestion of Mr. Richard Graham, to devote it to a School of Design or Drawing, for which it is peculiarly adapted. In order to improve the public taste, and especially to enable mechanics and artisans to acquire the power of sketching new patterns or designs, similar schools have been established with government assistance, and under the superintendence of the Board of Trade, in many parts of these countries. Your Committee can see no valid reason why the inhabitants of Clonmel should not be partakers of this advantage.—The Government Commissioners will procure a competent teacher, and guarantee him a suitable salary for a limited period; and will also furnish the school with the necessary models and other requisites, at less than half the original cost. And they only require some responsible party—such as your Committee—to provide a suitable room, to fit it up with desks, &c., to guarantee a certain amount of pupils, to fix and collect their fees, and so to manage and conduct the school, that it may in the end, become self-supporting, and confer a permanent benefit on the community. Such a room your Committee now have at their disposal; and Captain Owen, the Government Inspector, has already seen, and pronounced it most suitable. It can hardly be doubted that Clonmel, with its energetic and prosperous community, can furnish an ample amount of pupils. And the chief obstacle that has hitherto deterred your Commit-

tee from attempting to establish it, is the same all powerful one—the want of funds.

Your Committee, however, have much pleasure in reporting that they see before them the pleasing prospect of being enabled to surmount this obstacle, through the generous offer of their Vice-President, Wilson Kennedy Esq. That gentleman has proposed to place £50 at their disposal, for the purpose of enabling them to carry out this project; and with the view of originating at present, a liberal public contribution to the funds of the Institute. The project is one which deserves the warmest support of every friend to the intellectual improvement of society. Your Committee, therefore, cannot anticipate any disinclination on the part of their townsmen to support it liberally. Much less can they anticipate that their Vice-President's most generous offer will not be responded to as it deserves, by the friends and supporters of this institute.

Nor are those the only subjects that have come under the consideration of your committee. To fit up and furnish properly the large room above stairs, it has not been overlooked by them that glass cases around the walls, to serve as repositories for specimens of natural history, antiquities, curiosities, models of inventions, and works of art, would be most desirable. Indeed, a number of such things at present belong to the Institute, but your committee have no fit place to preserve or exhibit them. Were such fitting receptacles provided, many voluntary contributions would flow in, which would, in time, form no inconsiderable museum, and tend to promote the study of natural history, science and the arts.

Further, the introduction of classical instruction, by opening a school for that purpose in the apartments now or about to be vacated, by the removal of the Newspapers and Library into the new Building, has been under the consideration of your committee. A school, where the elements of classical learning could be obtained on reasonable terms, by the children of the middle classes, is at present felt to be much wanted in Clonmel. The opening of such a school in the Institute would ultimately tend to advance its interests. It might be made at present most conducive to the benefit of our excellent English school. By dividing the day into two periods, pupils could avail themselves of the advantages of each. Twenty-five classical pupils at 10s per quarter each, would give an income of 50*l.* per year. And for the services of a classical teacher for a period of not more than three hours in the day, this could not be deemed an inadequate remuneration.

Finally, your Committee feel that an Institution of this kind, depending as it does on the voluntary contributions of the public, cannot continue for any length of time stationary. It must either advance in public estimation, by adapting itself to their wants, and supplying their intellectual necessities; or it must recede. Your Committee have here humbly endeavoured to trace out for their successors in office the advancing path of usefulness. They are aware, however, that they will be entirely powerless without the aid of your influence and pecuniary support. But they cannot persuade themselves that that support will be withheld at this important crisis of the existence of this Institution. The Building being now completed, you will not suffer it to lie useless. The necessity for that support is immediate and urgent. To your hands therefore, your committee now entrust the interests of this Establishment, hoping that by your liberality you will enable their successors to realise at least a portion of that usefulness here contemplated.



Financial state of the Institute.

The following are the Liabilities on the
31st of December, 1853.

Rent	...	...	...	14	0	0
Coal	...	...	...	3	8	10
Newspapers	...	...	...	4	5	10
Books and Periodicals	...	...	...	9	7	7½
Printing and Advertising	...	...	...	2	15	6
Assurance paid by Treasurer	...	...	...	2	5	0
Gas	...	...	...	8	4	6
Candles	...	...	...	0	12	8
Schoolmaster	...	...	...	3	2	1
Secretary and servant	...	...	...	16	5	0
Sundries	...	...	...	0	17	2
				£66	4	2½

The annexed is the Treasurer's Account of the Income and Expenditure
for the past Year:

INCOME.		EXPENDITURE.	
By Subscriptions ...	98 15 9	To Books and Bookbinding	17 10 1
From trustees of Mr. Grubb	5 0 0	Newspapers	19 15 7
Proceeds of Lectures	4 12 10½	Printing and Advertising	11 6 0
Hire of Lecture Room	18 9 0	School Books bought	3 15 1
Newspapers, &c., sold	12 17 4	Schoolmasters	55 16 1½
Fines	4 5 8	Secretary and servant	24 1 6¼
Aid from National Board	40 3 4	Rent and Poor Rates	28 1 0
Pupils Fees	15 14 8	Gas	13 13 0
Sundries	2 3 1	Coal and Candles	11 2 3
Balance from 1852	13 3 4	Dr. McElheran's Lectures	10 0 0
		Dr. McKnight's Expenses	5 0 0
Total	215 5 1	Sundries	13 8 10
		Total	213 9 6
		Balance...	1 15 7
			215 5 1

RESOLUTIONS

PASSED

At the Annual General Meeting,
1854.

At the Twelfth Annual Meeting of the Members and Friends of the Clonmel Mechanic's Institute, held in the Lecture Room of the above Institute on Thursday, Jan. 5th, 1854.

The chair was taken at a quarter past Eight o'Clock, by the Right Worshipful O'BRIEN MAHONY, Esq. M.D. Mayor and President of the Society.

The Honorary Secretary, Mr. Thomas Dorney, then read the report of the committee for the year 1853, when the following resolutions were adopted :—

Proposed by Edward Phelan, Esq. M.D.J.P. ; seconded by Joseph Higgins Esq. :—

“Resolved—That the report now read be received and adopted.

Proposed by John Murphy Esq. ; seconded by Rev. Charles Fry :—

“Resolved—That the thanks of this meeting are due and hereby given to the Committee of the Clonmel Mechanics' Institute, for their labours during the past year.

Proposed by Rev. James Orr ; seconded by Edmund Power, Esq. :—

“Resolved—That this Meeting approves of the suggestions of the Committee, with respect to the alteration in the rates of subscription of those desirous to avail themselves of the News Room, and thereby pass it into a law.

Proposed by Alderman Hackett, J.P. ; seconded by John Luther, Esq. J.P. :—

“Resolved—That the thanks of this Meeting are due and hereby given to Wilson Kennedy Esq., for his highly generous offer ; and also for his active superintendence of the Industrial School, which has conferred such important advantages on the community.

Proposed by William Malcomson, Esq. ; seconded by Wilson Kennedy, Esq. :—

“Resolved—That this meeting hereby resolve to second the offer of Mr. Kennedy, by originating a public subscription for the benefit of this Institution, at this period of its history, and placing it in the hands of the Committee, to enable them to carry out their most laudable and useful projects.”

On the motion of the Rev. Mr. Orr, seconded by Wm. Davis, Esq. the Mayor was moved from the Chair, and Wilson Kennedy, Esq. called thereto, and thanks having been voted to his Worship, the proceedings terminated.

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Journal of the Committee

THE
GENERAL COMMITTEE FOR 1854.

President:
His Worship O'BRIEN MAHONY, Esq., Mayor.

Vice Presidents:
ALEXANDER HACKETT, J.P.
PETER M'SWINEY, Esq.
WILSON KENNEDY, Esq.

Treasurer:
RICHARD GRAHAM, Esq.

Committee:
SAMUEL BRADFORD,
ALEXANDER BOYD,
WILLIAM CHAPMAN,
RICHARD CLEARY,
THOMAS DORNEY,
THOMAS FLOYD,
DOCTOR FLYNN,
JAMES GILL,
THOMAS GRAHAM,
WILLIAM LEGGE,
ANDREW MILNE,
WILLIAM NUNAN,
OLIVER NETHERCOTT,
REV. JAMES O'NEIL,
JAMES H. O'NEIL,
DOCTOR TREHAN,
THOMAS S. PROSSER,
WILLIAM ROLAND,
DOCTOR SULLIVAN,
HENRY WILLIAMS,
JOHN WALLACE.

THOMAS DORNEY, Hon. Sec.
P. J. PURCELL, Sec. and Librarian.

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INTELLIGENCE AND ART
General Mechanics' Institute

THE
GENERAL COMMITTEE FOR 1854.

President:

His Worship O'BRIEN MAHONY, Esq., Mayor.

Vice Presidents:

ALDERMAN HACKETT, J.P.
PETER M'SWINEY, Esq.,
WILSON KENNEDY, Esq.

Treasurer:

RICHARD GRAHAM, Esq.

Committee:

SAMUEL BRADFORD,
ALEXANDER BOYD,
WILLIAM CHAPMAN,
RICHARD CREAN,
THOMAS DORNEY,
THOMAS FLOYD,
DOCTOR FLYNN,
JAMES GILL,
THOMAS GRAHAM,
WILLIAM LEGGE,
ANDREW MILNE,
WILLIAM NUNAN,
OLIVER NETHERCOTT,
REV. JAMES ORR,
JAMES H. O'NEILL,
DOCTOR PHELAN,
THOMAS S. PROSSOR,
WILLIAM POLLARD,
DOCTOR SCULLY,
HENRY WILLIAMS,
JOHN WALLACE.

(mc)

THOMAS DORNEY, Hon. Sec.
P. J. PURCELL, Sec. and Librarian.

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DEPARTMENT OF
1854